



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
McDOWELL SONORAN PRESEVE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

Thursday, December 1, 2011

**Florence Ely Nelson Desert Park
8950 E. Pinnacle Peak Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85255**

SUMMARIZED MINUTES

PRESENT: Howard Myers, Chairman
James Heitel, Vice Chairman
Rand Hubbell, Commissioner
Deke Joralmon, Commissioner (telephonic)
Fred Klein, Commissioner
Marg Nelssen, Commissioner
Susan Wheeler, Commissioner

STAFF: Bill Murphy
Kroy Ekblaw
Claire Miller
Robbin Schweitzer
Scott Hamilton

GUESTS: Mike Nolan
David Hay
Linda Whitehead
Con Englehorn
Jack McEnroe

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Myers called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members present as noted above.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public wished to speak.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the Regular Meeting minutes of November 3, 2011

COMMISSIONER NELSEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 3, 2011, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WHEELER, THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

5. MCDOWELL SONORAN CONSERVANCY UPDATE

Mr. Nolan provided an update on activities at the Conservancy related to the small mammal inventory, which is achieved through digital photography and live trapping. Traps are currently being placed for the small insect studies. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve plant survey is available on the website seinet.org.

6. MSC/COS AGREEMENT UPDATE

Mr. Murphy explained that he and Mr. Ekblaw have worked with Mr. Nolan to prioritize items in the agreement entered into in 2009 between the City and the Conservancy that will help with the continual maintenance of the Preserve as it expands north. Top priority is the patrol, which reports back to staff on Preserve conditions, second priority is maintenance for access areas and trail making including salvage work, the continuance of the Pathfinders as hosts at trailheads, and scientific research. The amended agreement is scheduled for City Council approval on December 6.

7. 2012 CHALLENGE UPDATE

Mr. Ekblaw reviewed the planned route for the event which will be starting in the Brown's Ranch area and then move into areas slated for land acquisition. It is intended that participants will understand that the area is part of the target and strategic plan going forward and will promote the acquisition.

8. SPECIAL USE GUIDELINES

Extensive discussion ensued regarding the previous recommendation by the Commission to restrict events in the Preserve to passive events, which would require an Ordinance change to effect. Staff reviewed the process required to change the Ordinance, including the development of appropriate language, public input, and Council approval.

Mr. Ekblaw noted that Preserve staff has been sensitive to the issue of setting precedents when allowing events to be held in the Preserve. He said that a review could be prepared in time for the February MSPC meeting and representatives from groups that have held events or inquired about holding them could be invited to participate.

COMMISSIONER WHEELER MOVED TO AGENDIZE A DISCUSSION ABOUT COMPETITIVE EVENTS IN THE PRESERVE AS OUTLINED IN THE SPECIAL USE

GUIDELINES FOR AN UPCOMING MEETING AND TO INVITE USERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSION. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KLEIN, THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

9. STAFF REPORTS

- **Overflow Parking Strategies**

Mr. Ekblaw noted that City Attorneys are currently reviewing a draft proposal regarding the possibility of utilizing the site being developed by Bixby Development for parking. This would provide 50 parking stalls on weekends and holidays, which would eliminate the need to install parking for the trail connections in that area. A second opportunity at Anasazi School near Lost Dog Wash is being considered.

- **Land Acquisition Update 2011 & 2012**

Mr. Ekblaw said that auctions are scheduled for December 7th and 14th at 10:00 a.m. at the State Land Department. Applications for east, central, and west have been turned in and due diligence has begun. He noted that once the State Land Department holds their internal meeting, the City expects to discuss when the rezoning can move forward beginning in January or February with the hope to go to City Council in March or April

- **North Area Update**

Tom's Thumb Update

Mr. Hamilton noted that grading is completed at Tom's Thumb and the building footings and ribbon curb are in progress. The project is on track for completion in May.

Brown's Ranch

Mr. Hamilton gave an update on input received during the public meeting held on October 24th. The primary concern was about traffic and parking. The next meeting is scheduled for December 7 at 5:30 at Troon North Club. The municipal use site plan will be reviewed by Planning Commission on December 14th and City Council on January 10th. Construction is anticipated to begin in fall of 2012 with anticipated completion in 2013.

Planning Efforts

Mr. Hamilton explained that a small group of people including Commissioner Klein are holding meetings to work on trail planning, access planning, and priorities for the north area.

APS

Mr. Hamilton noted that the gates have been installed and signage regarding area closures is being updated. Fencing will be installed later in December in areas of trenching operations, which are scheduled to begin in mid-January.

Recent Work Projects Update

Ms. Miller gave an overview of projects scheduled for December.

Commissioners commented regarding the north area master trails plan.

Ms. Miller noted that the Police Department is actively working on recent break-ins.

- **Desert Discovery Center Phase III Feasibility Committee**

Mr. Ekblaw reviewed the activities of the Desert Discovery Center Phase III Feasibility Committee, noting that they requested that staff look at the issue of the relationship of the DDC to the Preserve and draft a specific legal description of the location and rules applying to the area as a subset within the Preserve. A draft recommendation should be completed by the Committee sometime in January. Any Preserve Ordinance amendment would be contingent on whether there was private funding and on a successful bond vote.

Commissioners were given the opportunity to ask questions.

- **Status of State land adjacent to Pinnacle Peak Park**

Mr. Ekblaw reviewed the map of State lands relating to the zoning case and the three acres acquired by Preserve dollars within the recommended study boundary. Discussion ensued regarding the viability of the City pursuing purchase of the land. It was the consensus of the Commission to recommend waiting for another developer to purchase the land to negotiate a deal for parking.

10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Klein requested that discussion about labeling common desert plants in the vicinity of trail heads that do not have interpretive trails be agendaized.

In response to a question by Chairman Myer, Mr. Ekblaw said that January 10 or 24 are possible dates for the Land Acquisition Plan to go to City Council.

11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR JANUARY 12, 2012

- Possible agenda items include:
- Election of Officers
- Annual Ethics Refresher Training
- Tour
- MSPC Quarterly Report to City Council

Mr. Ekblaw noted that City Council would be making Commissioner nominations for two positions on December 13 and appointments on January 10.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.